

REMARKS

This amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action having a mailing date of September 26, 2007. Various claims are amended and canceled as shown. No new matter has been added. With this amendment, claims 1, 5-7, 10-12, and 15 are pending in the application.

I. Allowable subject matter

The present Office Action allowed claims 1, 5-7, 10-12, and 15. The Examiner is thanked for this indication of allowable subject matter.

Claims 1, 5-7, 10-12, and 15 are amended as shown to provide proper antecedent basis, to more precisely recite the subject matter contained therein, to make grammatical/typographical corrections, and/or to otherwise place such claims in better form. It is respectfully submitted that these amendments to claims 1, 5-7, 10-12, and 15 do not affect the allowability thereof.

II. Comments on statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter

Pages 5-8 of the present Office Action provided a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter. In the statement, the general language from independent claims 1, 7, and 12 was provided. To the extent that there may be any inconsistencies between the language reflected in the statement and the actual language in claims 1, 7, and 12 as amended herein, the actual/exact language in claims 1, 7, and 12 determines the allowability and scope thereof, rather than the statement.

Moreover, the statement indicated that the dependent claims were allowable by virtue of their dependency upon their respective allowable independent claims. It is noted herein that the dependent claims are also further allowable by virtue of the recitations contained therein.

Furthermore, the statement addressed the allowability of the claims over Miyamoto (U.S. Patent No. 6,236,635). It is noted herein that the claims are allowable over all of the references on record, whether singly or in combination with Miyamoto.

Accordingly from the above, the scopes of the claims are not to be limited by Miyamoto.

III. Claim rejections

The present Office Action rejected claims 16 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyamoto in view of Ito (U.S. Patent No. 5,768,251).

In order to facilitate prosecution and without admission that these rejections were proper, claims 16 and 18-20 are canceled herein without prejudice, thereby rendering these rejections moot.

IV. Conclusion

Overall, the cited references do not singly, or in any motivated combination, disclose, teach, or suggest the features in the pending independent claims. Because the remaining dependent claims depend from the allowable independent claims, and also because they include additional limitations, such dependent claims are likewise allowable. If the attorney/agent of record has overlooked a relevant teaching in any of the references, the Examiner is requested to point out specifically where such teaching may be found.

If there are any lingering issues or informalities that can be expediently resolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the attorney/agent of record by telephone to discuss such issues/informalities. It is hoped that such telephonic discussion can facilitate and expedite a Notice of Allowance.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this communication, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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